

## WE CLAIM:

1. A method of enhancing a screen display of a gaming machine, the method including the steps of:  
 creating a background scene for a game screen;
- 5 creating a plurality of composite symbols to overlie the background scene; and  
 rendering at least a portion of each composite symbol transparent to enable the background scene to be viewed through the composite symbol.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1 which includes rendering a carrier of each of at least certain of the composite symbols transparent.
3. The method of claim 1 which includes rendering said portion of each composite symbol transparent by a software implementation.
- 15 4. The method of claim 4 which includes setting said portion of each composite symbol to an appropriate alpha channel value in an alpha channel range.
- 20 5. The method of claim 4 which includes employing an objects based graphics system for development of the composite symbol with portions of the composite symbol being rendered opaque.
6. The method of claim 1 which includes creating a representation of a  
 25 flashing composite symbol.
7. The method of claim 6 which includes placing a part of the background scene over the composite symbol and placing a flashing composite symbol animation on top of the part of the background scene to provide a flashing  
 30 composite symbol.
8. The method of claim 6 which includes causing the composite symbol itself to be flashed on and off directly on top of the underlying part of the background scene so that the background scene remains visible and any  
 35 background animations continue while the composite symbol flashes.

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9. A gaming machine screen display which includes:  
a background scene for a game screen; and  
a plurality of composite symbols which overlie the background scene,  
at least a portion of each composite symbol being transparent to enable the  
5 background scene to be viewed through the composite symbol.
10. The screen display of claim 9 in which a carrier of each of at least  
certain of the composite symbols is rendered transparent.
- 10 11. The screen display of claim 9 in which said portion of each composite  
symbol is rendered transparent by an appropriate selection of alpha channel  
value in an alpha channel range.
12. The screen display of claim 9 which comprises a composite image with  
15 the composite symbols overlying the background scene.
13. The screen display of claim 12 which incorporates various animations.